WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of reading an identifying mark in the form of a character, a figure, or a symbol, which is formed in a predetermined portion of a surface of an ophthalmic lens and which identifies said ophthalmic lens, comprising the steps of:

irradiating said ophthalmic lens with an excitation light so that a self-fluorescent light is emitted from said ophthalmic lens;

taking a fluorescent image of said ophthalmic lens while said ophthalmic lens is emitting said self-fluorescent light;

obtaining information on said ophthalmic lens by reading said identifying mark formed in said ophthalmic lens on the basis of said fluorescent image.

2. A method according to claim 1, further comprising a step of judging whether the obtained information is identical with prepared reference information.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein said step of irradiating said ophthalmic lens with an excitation light and said step of taking a fluorescent image are effected with said ophthalmic lens being immersed in a liquid medium accommodated in a container.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein said step of taking a fluorescent image of said ophthalmic lens is effected by using a CCD camera.

5. A method according to claim 1, wherein said excitation light is a UV light having a wavelength in a range of 200-400 nm.

6. A method according to claim 1, wherein said self-fluorescent light has a wavelength in a range of 340-470 nm.

7. A method of obtaining a thickness of an ophthalmic lens, comprising the steps of:

irradiating said ophthalmic lens with an excitation light so that a self-fluorescent light is emitted from said ophthalmic lens;

obtaining a luminance value at a thickness measuring portion of said ophthalmic lens from said self-fluorescent light; and

determining said thickness at said thickness measuring portion on the basis of the obtained luminance value and according to a predetermined relationship between the thickness of said thickness measuring portion and the luminance value of the self-fluorescent light generated by irradiation with the excitation light.

8. A method according to claim 7, wherein said step of obtaining a luminance value at said thickness measuring portion comprises a step of taking a fluorescent image of said ophthalmic lens while said ophthalmic lens is emitting said self-fluorescent light, said fluorescent image representing a

distribution of luminance values on a surface of said ophthalmic lens irradiated with said excitation light, said luminance value at said thickness measuring portion being obtained on the basis of said distribution.

9. A method according to claim 8, wherein said step of taking a fluorescent image of said ophthalmic lens is effected by using a CCD camera.

10. A method according to claim 8, wherein said fluorescent image of said ophthalmic lens represents a distribution of different colors corresponding to respective values of luminance of local portions of said ophthalmic lens, said thickness of said thickness measuring portion being obtained from one of said different colors which corresponds to said thickness measuring portion.

11. A method according to claim 7, wherein said excitation light is a UV light having a wavelength in a range of 200-400 nm.

12. A method according to claim 7, wherein said self fluorescence light has a wavelength in a range of 340-470 nm.

13. A method of detecting an angular position of an ophthalmic lens having circumferential portions having

respective different thickness values, comprising the steps of:

irradiating said ophthalmic lens with an excitation light so that a self-fluorescent light is emitted from said ophthalmic lens;

taking a fluorescent image of said ophthalmic lens while said ophthalmic lens is emitting said self-fluorescent light, said fluorescent image representing a distribution of luminance values on a surface of said ophthalmic lens irradiated with said excitation light; and

determining said angular position of said ophthalmic lens on the basis of said distribution.

14. A method according to claim 13, wherein said ophthalmic lens is a special contact lens which consists of an astigmatism correction contact lens or a presbyopia correction contact lens.

15. A method according to claim 13, wherein said angular position is defined by a position of one of the thickest circumferential portion, a distant vision correction region, and a near vision correction region of said ophthalmic lens, in said circumferential direction.

16. A method according to claim 15, wherein said thickest circumferential portion is aligned with a reference radial direction which is defined as a radial direction extending from a geometrical center of said ophthalmic lens toward said thickest circumferential portion.

17. A method according to claim 13, wherein said step of irradiating said ophthalmic lens with an excitation light and said step of taking a fluorescent image are effected with said ophthalmic lens being immersed in a liquid medium accommodated in a container.

18. A method according to claim 13, wherein said step of taking a fluorescent image is effected by using a CCD camera.

19. A method according to claim 13, wherein said fluorescent image of said ophthalmic lens represents a distribution of different colors corresponding to respective values of luminance of local portions of said ophthalmic lens.

20. A method according to claim 13, wherein said excitation light is a UV light having a wavelength in a range of 200-400 nm.

21. A method according to claim 13, wherein said self-fluorescent light has a wavelength in a range of 340-470 nm.